Appendix E

Public Scoping Summary

The table below summarizes the comments received during public scoping of the Sagehen project. The comments were reviewed by the Responsible Officials to identify issues to be addressed in development of the proposed action, alternatives, project design features and mitigation measures, as well as analyzed in the for environmental effects in Chapter 3 of the EA. Issues are cause and effect relationships which serve to highlight effects or unintended consequences that may occur from the proposed action, providing opportunities during the analysis to explore alternative ways to meet the purpose and need for the proposal while reducing adverse effects. Key issues addressed in the EA were identified from scoping comments as displayed on the table below and are discussed in Chapter (1). Copies of the nine comment letters and emails received during scoping are a part of the Sagehen project record on file with the Tahoe National Forest.

Table B.1. Public Scoping Summary

Summary of Comment	Synopsis	Commenter and Date
1. The Purpose and Need and Proposed Action Document is very well done!	Supportive statement on quality of scoping document.	Steven Brink, California Forestry Association, 11/22/2011
2. I am very interested in the project.	Expression of interest.	John Eaton, 11/22/2011
3. Congratulations on getting this finished! I look forward to reviewing it.	Expression of interest and support.	David Edelson, The Nature Conservancy, 11/22/2011
4. Thanks for sending this….Congrats for getting to this point after all your hard work.	Expression of interest and support.	Susan Kocher, UC Davis, 12/2/2011
5. I think this is a fantastic opportunity to monitor impacts of spring operations on wildlife. You might want to consider seasonal impacts on food availability, wildlife distribution and abundance for a wide variety of prey and predators when setting up your monitoring program, maybe using the USFS MIS list as a guide.	Comments pertain to post-project monitoring. The Forest Service supports post project monitoring of wildlife effects by Sagehen Field Station and the scientific research community. See the section on monitoring at the near the end of Chapter 2 of the EA for additional information on monitoring.	Lorna Dobrovolny, California Dept. of Fish and Game, 12/6/2011
6. The shutdown of SPI Loyalton cogeneration plant has limited the ability of the remaining facilities to absorb this amount of woods fuel. We recommend the agency require	Comment pertains to Loyalton biomass plant shutdown.	Tom Downing, Sierra Pacific Industries, 12/6/2011

Summary of Comment	Synopsis	Commenter and Date
the non-saw be piled on site and burned.	The proposed action allows for the non-saw biomass to either be piled on site and burned or hauled off-site to cogeneration facilities.	
7. We are pleased that the TNF has used the GTR-220 as a guide for managing this project. Using existing clumps of trees and open space as a base, and overlaying the wildlife requirements before determining the variable marking requirements for fuel reduction is an exciting approach and hopefully will be a method used for future forest projects. The Forest Issues Group (FIG) is very interested in this project, especially because of its potential to produce insight into how various treatment methods affect fuels, and how changes in stand structure might affect habitat quality for dependent species, included spotted owls and marten. We look forward to follow the progress of this experiment as observers, and more closely as contributors where appropriate. Thanks. We look forward to your success with this project.	Expression of interest and support.	Don Rivenes, Forest Issues Group, 12/19/2011
8. Continued monitoring for the return of marten in the Sagehen landscape is the only way we will know (if & when) the restoration effort actually has a positive impact on the once active marten population in the area. We recommend that PSW and California academic institutions continue to support and invite marten research in the Sagehen Basin.	Comment pertains to post-project monitoring by academic institutions. The Forest Service supports continued monitoring by a variety of entities, academic institutions and scientists. UC Berkley's Sagehen Field Station is operated under Special Use Permit from the Forest Service. See the section on monitoring at the end of Chapter 2 of the EA for additional information on monitoring.	Craig Thomas, Sierra Forest Legacy, 12/21/2011
9. On the final spring field trip District staff mentioned finding a new goshawk location in one of the northern units. Do you place a Goshawk PAC around this new	Management of new northern goshawk location within project area. One of the primary purposes of the Sagehen project, as	Craig Thomas, Sierra Forest Legacy, 12/21/2011

Summary of Comment	Synopsis	Commenter and Date
location? Is this new sighting one of the five Goshawks mentioned in the proposed action?	described in Chapter (1), is to improve habitat conditions for species that rely on late seral forest settings such as northern goshawk. The vegetation and fuels prescriptions of the proposed action were designed specifically with that objective in mind. The discovery of a new northern goshawk location late during project planning resulted in delineation of a new northern goshawk PAC within the project area, bringing the total to five, and posed the question of how to modify the proposed action in response, while still taking action to enhance late seral forest conditions and associated wildlife habitat to benefit the species. ***This comment highlights a key issue identified in the EA pertaining to treatment of northern goshawk PACS and habitat.*** A project-level non-significant Forest Plan Amendment has been added to the Proposed Action (Alternative 1) to allow for mechanical treatments within the new goshawk PAC. See Chapter (1), Issues, **Issue (2)** and **FONSI Element 10** for a full discussion. Chapter 3 of the EA in the Wildlife effects section contains additional information regarding potential effects to northern goshawk. Appendix A lists Standard Management Requirements to protect the species and its habitat during project implementation.	

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10. It is not clear from the Proposed Action if there were known marten denning (natal and maternal) site in the project area? Known marten denning sites require protection in the 2004 Framework ROD. I don't believe we ever discussed known denning areas (if they exist) and how they would be managed.	Management and protection of marten denning sites in the project area. No known marten denning sites have been documented in the project area. According to a recent study on the American marten population in the Sagehen Basin (Moriarty 2008), there were no recorded sightings of Marten use in the northeastern portion of the basin where the majority of the treatment units are situated. Therefore, it is unlikely that denning sites occur there. There is a possibility that denning sites occur in treatment units in the southwestern portion of the basin; in these cases a limited operating period will be observed for treatments to avoid periods of marten denning activities. If denning sites are discovered prior to or during project implementation, they will be protected from vegetation treatments and burning activities. The proposed action protects potential denning structures in the project area and specific prescriptions are applied to enhance American marten reproductive habitat, including the creation of short snags and the partial girdling of other trees. As noted earlier, one of the primary purposes of the Sagehen project, as described in Chapter (1), is to improve habitat conditions for species that rely on late seral forest settings. This includes the American marten. ***This comment highlights a key issue identified in the EA pertaining to treatment of American marten***	Craig Thomas, Sierra Forest Legacy, 12/21/2011

Summary of Comment	Synopsis	Commenter and Date
	habitat. See Chapter (1), Issues, **Issue (1)** for a discussion of this issue. Also see Chapter (3) of the EA (Wildlife effects section) regarding potential effects to American marten and its habitat.	
11. In the fire behavior modeling, within dense cover areas, and early seral openings were these unique areas burned as stand-alone areas and then summed for the units? Is the fire modeling able to capture the nature in which fire would accelerate or slow in these DACs and ESOs and their impact on fire behavior?	Questions concerning fire behavior modeling used for DAC's and ESO's. DCAs and ESO's were modeled with farsite runs to see how those features would affect fire moving through the landscape. The effect was minimal. For a detailed discussion see the fuels report in "Dense Cover Areas/Early Seral Openings and their Effects on Fire Behavior" under the "Prescription Features not in Modeling" section of the fuels report. DCA's and ESO's were not modeled in flammap because DCA's would be expected to burn as untreated areas and ESO's would have little fire behavior because of removal of flammable material. Fire behavior modeling in the DCAs showed an increase in fire behavior (passive and active crown fires) during 90th percentile conditions. This was expected; fire behavior within a DCA would be the same as an untreated area. However; the small and isolated acreages of DCAs proposed under Alternative 1 will have a minimum effect on fire behavior and may mimic what a wildland fire would have burned like historically.	Craig Thomas, Sierra Forest Legacy, 12/21/2011
12. It would be very useful for the Forest Service to explicitly disclose the specific techniques and costs for	Suggestion concerning disclosure of techniques and costs for the Sagehen project.	Craig Thomas, Sierra Forest Legacy, 12/21/2011

Summary of Comment	Synopsis	Commenter and Date
marking the unique designs for Sagehen and other lessons learned from marking complex prescriptions.	This information is beyond the scope of the EA, but is available from the Forest Service. The Tahoe National Forest has shared specific techniques and design features developed for the Sagehen Project with several other National Forest units.	
13. Lop and scatter fuels prescriptions mentioned on page 35…adds significant material to the surface fuels in the short term…the lop and scattered material could increase fire effects. We support…pile burning and prescribed fire…across the Sagehen landscape.	Lop and scatter treatments could increase fire effects. Lop and scatter mastication treatments would reduce the size of fuels and put them on the ground. The purpose of a lop and scatter prescription, by changing the arrangement and size of fuels, is to take the fuels to a condition that allows the material to break down more rapidly and/or burn more quickly with less intensity. Although the threat of a forest fire threatening the project area exists now and into the future, the potential for high intensity crown fires in treated areas would be reduced. Most units with lop and scatter prescriptions are treated with subsequent underburning. For these reasons, the risk of increased future fire effects resulting from project prescriptions is considered low. Lop and scatter fuels prescriptions are prescribed in units 46 (574 acres), 76 (87 acres), 85 (63 acres), 87 (207 acres) and 99 (45 acres) for a total area of 976 acres. In units 46 and 76, lop and scatter activities will be followed by underburning for 661 treated acres. In units 85, 87 and 99, lop and scatter activities for 315 treated acres will not be followed by prescribed fire. Although from a resource management perspective it would be desirable to underburn these units as well, current staffing and funding levels, as well as the complexities of burning condition prescriptions, preclude using prescribed fire in every project treatment unit. However, the proposed management prescriptions are still projected to enhance wildlife	Craig Thomas, Sierra Forest Legacy, 12/21/2011

Summary of Comment	Synopsis	Commenter and Date
	habitat and forest health over the long term. The fire excluded units were selected as a lower priority for underburning treatments, given limited resources, because they are farther away from Sagehen Field Station. The units selected for underburning will help maximize fire protection of the Sagehen Field Station. ***This comment highlights a key issue identified in the EA pertaining to the effects of fuels treatments on stand and landscape scale fire behavior.*** See Chapter (1), Issues, **Issue (4)** for a discussion of this issue. Also see Chapter (3) of the EA (Fire and Fuels effects section) for detailed information on project effects to fire and fuels conditions.	
14. We understand that increased fire use has some short-term ecological costs to rare resources such as the impact on large down logs and "high stumps" used by marten and other wildlife. We appreciate whatever efforts the District fuels staff can make to protect these resources such as lining and creative firing approaches (or foaming) but understand that some of these attributes will burn.	Increased fire use has short-term effects on marten and other wildlife. As discussed in the fire and fuels prescriptions (surface fire Rx) of the alternatives, "spring-like condition surface fire prescriptions would be emphasized (which would minimize impacts to down logs and high stumps), however due to limited suitable burning conditions, surface fire prescriptions under fall-like conditions would be implemented in some cases. In these cases, extra measures to protect large dead wood, such as creating firelines around large logs/snags, would be implemented." SMR #.... The Sagehen Project has outlined specific needs of old forest sensitive species including short snags (high stumps) and down logs. These features are to be retained in the appropriate amounts (outlined in the project record) regardless of the prescription. Further, the decadent feature enhancement prescription is aimed at adding to these feature amounts where it is	Craig Thomas, Sierra Forest Legacy, 12/21/2011.

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	understood to be deficient. Finally, the variable mark and DCA prescription is expected to have pockets of higher mortality which will increase opportunities for larger snags to develop which will then become short snags and down woody material in the future. After fire is restored into the ecosystem through this project, it is known that some trees will die and fall as a result. This will subsequently create more short snags and down logs. See Chapter (3) of the EA (Forest Vegetation, Tree mortality section) for a detailed discussion of this topic. ***This comment highlights key issues identified in the EA pertaining to the effects of fuels treatments on old forest habitat and wildlife dependent upon it, such as American marten and other species.*** See Chapter (1), Issues, **Issue (1), (2) and (3)** for a full discussion of this issue. Also see Chapter 3 of the EA (Wildlife effects section).	
15. The "non-commercial funding alternative" exploration is an alternative that no entity involved in the CASE 2:05-cv-00205-MCE-GGH in the Eastern District ever asked for except the court itself. We suggest the District not waste any time or funding analyzing this alternative since the parties in the case never proposed such an alternative.	Non-commercial funding alternative requirement. The mandatory inclusion of a non-commercial funding alternative has already been decided by court order. It is included in Chapter (2) as Alternative 3.	Craig Thomas, Sierra Forest Legacy, 12/21/2011
16. Page 42 highlights that 7-11% of trees removed will be in the 20-29.9 size class (as suggested in the test plots). We assume that with the aspen restoration, legacy tree prescriptions and other treatments some trees this size will	Request for tracking of project implementation. The Forest Service tracked exactly how many trees were being removed from the treatment areas proposed for mechanical thinning. It turns out that	Craig Thomas, Sierra Forest Legacy, 12/21/2011

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be removed. We also assume most of these trees will be white fir in areas (or at densities) that are uncharacteristic of vegetation types and ranges of species composition. We request tracking the large tree removal across the units to verify levels of removal compared to the assumptions from the test plots.	trees marked for removal in the 20- to 29.9-inch dbh size class made up only 1.4% of all trees marked across the project and that the 7-11% in the test plots was actually on the high end of what was marked across the project area. An in- depth discussion on effects on medium and large trees under each alternative is provided in Chapter (3) (Forest Vegetation section) and the "direct and indirect effects" section of the silviculture report.	
17. This project will require coverage under the 2009 Timber Waiver. Please review the 2009 Timber Waiver criteria and conditions while developing specific resource protection measures and design features for the Proposed Action. Portions of the project area are located within a 100-year flood plain. The Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region (Basin Plan) contains a prohibition against waste discharges to lands within 1OO-yearfloodplains in the Truckee River Hydrologic Unit… the Basin Plan provides that exemptions may be granted for the certain categories of projects, including: 1) projects solely intended to reduce or mitigate existing sources of erosion or water pollution or to restore the functional value to previously disturbed floodplain areas. Activities in wetlands require compliance with Section 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act.	2009 Timber Waiver Requirement, Basin Plan Discharge Exemption and Clean Water Act Requirements. The Forest Service will comply with the 2009 Timber Waiver and Basin Plan Discharge Exemption processes required by regulation, as well as Clean Water Act requirements according to the law. See Chapter 3, **FONSI Element 10,** Clean Water Act section for more discussion. Compliance with LWQCB requirements are further detailed in SMR's 22, 23 and 24 of Appendix A, in the Hydrology and Soils sections of Chapter 3, and in the Hydrology and Soils resource specialist reports incorporated by reference as part of the EA.	Douglas Cushman, Lahontan Water Quality Control Board (LWQCB) 12/12/2011